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Message Text

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ACTION SIL-01

INFO OCT-01 ARA-06 EUR-12 IO-13 ISO-00 CIAE-00 COME-00
EB-08 INR-07 LAB-04 NSAE-00 DODE-00 PA-01 USIA-06
PRS-01 SP-02 L-03 /065 W
----------111955Z 011796 /43
P 111636Z FEB 77
FM USMISSION EC BRUSSELS
TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 2994
INFO AMEMBASSY BONN PRIORITY
AMEMBASSY BUENOS AIRES PRIORITY
AMEMBASSY CARACAS PRIORITY
AMEMBASSY MEXICO CITY PRIORITY
USMISSION GENEVA PRIORITY

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E.O. 11652: N/A
TAGS: ELAB, 8:*57, AR, SHUM
SUBJECT: SPECIAL ICFTU MISSION TO ARGENTINA

REF: BUENOS AIRES 1091 (NOTAL)

1. A SEVEN-MAN DELEGATION OF THE INTERNATIONAL CONFEDERATION OF FREE TRADE UNIONS (ICFTU), HEADED BY ICFTU GENERAL SECRETARY OTTO KERSTEN, WILL BE VISITING ARGENTINA FEBRUARY 23 AND 24.

2. PURPOSE OF THE MISSION, ACCORDING TO ICFTU ASSISTANT GENERAL SECRETARY JOHN VANDERVEKEN, IS "GET ASSURANCES--AND A TIMETABLE"--FROM THE GOVERNMENT ON RELEASING JAILED TRADE UNIONISTS, RELAXING RESTRICTIONS ON UNIONS, AND PERMITTING EXILED TRADE UNIONISTS TO RETURN TO ARGENTINA. THIS IS THE ICFTU'S "LAST ATTEMPT" WITHARGENTINE AUTHORITIES, VANDERVEKEN ADDED, AND IF IT FAILS, THE ICFTU WOULD HAVE TO GO "MUCH MORE PUBLIC" ABOUT THE ARGENTINE SITUATION
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AND WOULD ALSO FILE A FORMAL COMPLAINT AGAINST ARGENTINA IN THE ILO.

3. MEMBERS OF THE DELEGATION BESIDES KERSTEN WILL BE JULIO ETCHEVERRY, GENERAL SECRETARY OF ORIT; AUGOSTO MALAVE VILLALBA OF VENEZUELA, AN ICFTU BOARD MEMBER; TULIO CUEVAS OF COLOMBIA, AND ALTERNATE BOARD

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MEMBER OF ICFTU; HERMAN REBHAN, GENERAL SECRETARY OF
THE INTERNATIONAL METALWORKERS FEDERATION; A REPRE-
SENTATIVE OF THE MEXICAN CTM, NOT YET DESIGNATED;
AND MARTIN HEISS, VICE PRESIDENT OF THE GERMAN DGB.
(IN EXPLAINING THE BALANCED ORIENTATION OF THE DELE-
GATION, VANDERVEKEN SAID IT WAS SIGNIFICANT THAT
HEISS IS A CHRISTIAN DEMOCRAT.)

4. ACCORDING TO VANDERVEKEN, KERSTEN INVITED AFL-CIO
PARTICIPATION IN THE DELEGATION IN A LETTER TO AFL-
CIO PRESIDENT MEANY APPROXIMATELY TWO WEEKS AGO AND IN A FOLLOW-UP
TELEGRAM LISTING THE DATES. VANDERVEKEN ALSO HAS KEPT
IN TOUCH WITH THE AFL-CIO'S EUROPEAN REPRESENTATIVE,
IRVING BROWN, AND THROUGH BROWN LEARNED THAT THE
AFL-CIO HAS DECIDED NOT TO PARTICIPATE. VANDERVEKEN
REPEATED TWICE THAT THERE WAS "NO CONFLICT" WITH THE AFL-CIO
OVER THE MATTER.

5. SO FAR THE ICFTU HAS NOT RELEASED ANY INFORMATION
TO THE PRESS ABOUT THE MISSION TO ARGENTINA BUT WILL
PROBABLY DO SO NEXT WEEK IN ITS SEMI-MONTHLY PRESS
BULLETIN. HINTON

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Message Attributes

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Disposition Date: 22 May 2009
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